

26 October 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTOR, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

VIA

: Deputy Director (P) *pk*

INSPECTOR GENERAL

75-3514

SUBJECT

: Potential Large-scale Availability of LSD
through Newly-discovered Synthesis by *[redacted]*

1. Up to the present time LSD has been available only in small amounts. In 1953 it was reported to us through several channels, including a message from a United States Military Attaché, that the *[redacted]* had 10 kilograms of this material for sale. You will recall that we enlisted the services of a representative of *[redacted]* who accompanied Mrs. *[redacted]* to discuss the matter with the *[redacted]*. It turned out that, according to *[redacted]* at least, the amount in their possession was in gram rather than kilogram quantities.

2. The availability of materials of this sort derived from ergot in such small quantity is probably due in a large measure to the fact that ergot itself is a natural product produced in limited quantities and containing only a small amount of active materials.

3. This situation is now completely changed since *[redacted]* has developed a practicable commercial total synthesis of LSD using readily available raw materials. Each step of their synthesis has been accomplished in comparable syntheses of other products in pilot-plant quantities. Therefore, *[redacted]* feels that in a matter of months LSD could be available in tonnage quantities.

4. Hitherto, LSD could not be considered seriously as a candidate Chemical Warfare agent for overt use. This was due to two factors;

a) Until recently only volatile liquids could be disseminated in a suitable fashion in bulk. LSD is a solid.

*Transcript
noted by CPC 10/30
+ ASD/2*

54-79

b) LSD could not be obtained in sufficient quantities.

LSD can now be produced in quantity and recent technical developments make it possible to disseminate solids in an effective manner.

5. Most of the significant information currently available on the disabling effects of LSD on humans has been obtained from the research activities supported during the past three years by the Chemical Division of ~~the~~ under the direction of ~~the~~ is continuing its research effort toward developing a capability for covert use of this material and the availability of LSD in large quantities will not affect our program. However, we feel it is highly advisable that certain components of the Department of Defense be advised of both the new syntheses at Lilly and our data on the effects of this material on human beings.

6. ~~we~~ therefore intends to apprise the Chemical Corps and the Air Force of this information through previously established scientific channels. Since the covert use of this material is not affected by this new situation, we will advise these components of the Department of Defense that any restrictions on dissemination of information to the public on LSD should be initiated by them.

7. The above is furnished for your information only. No action is required.

Chief, DD/P/